

ClaimsWhat is claimed is:

- 1    1. In a telephone customer service system for marketed  
2    computer software products wherein customers telephone  
3    service agents at remote service centers for service and  
4    technical advice, a system for tracking defects in said  
5    software products comprising:  
6        a computer controlled display associated with said  
7    service center;  
8        means on said display, ancillary to a customer  
9    telephone inquiry to said service center, for prompting  
10   said service agent at said service center to  
11   interactively select a software defect category to which  
12   said inquiry may relate; and  
13        means on said display responsive to a selection of a  
14   software defect category, to interactively prompt said  
15   service agent, during said telephone inquiry, to  
16   interactively respond to a set of statistical questions  
17   related to the defect category.
- 1    2. The telephone customer service system of claim 1  
2    further including database means associated with said  
3    service center for storing data representative of the  
4    responses of said service agent.
- 1    3. The telephone customer service system of claim 2  
2    further including means enabling the service agent to  
3    optionally enter said data into said database.

1 4. The telephone customer service system of claim 3  
2 wherein said means on said display for prompting said  
3 service agent prompt on a real-time basis coincident with  
4 the time during which the service agent responding within  
5 said telephone inquiry.

1 5. The telephone customer service system of claim 3  
2 further including:  
3 means for analyzing said stored data; and  
4 means for distributing the results of the analysis  
5 to the developers of said marketed products.

1 6. The telephone customer service system of claim 5  
2 further including:  
3 means for enabling the service agent to enter  
4 unprompted general comments relative to defects; and  
5 wherein said means for analyzing consider said  
6 general comments.

- 1 7. In a telephone customer service system for marketed  
2 computer software products wherein customers telephone  
3 service agents at remote service centers for service and  
4 technical advice including a computer controlled display,  
5 a method for tracking defects in said software products  
6 comprising:  
7 during customer telephone inquiry to said service  
8 center, prompting said service agent at said service  
9 center to interactively select a software defect category  
10 to which said inquiry may relate; and  
11 responsive to a selection of a software defect  
12 category, interactively prompting said service agent,  
13 during said telephone inquiry, to interactively respond  
14 to a set of statistical questions related to the defect  
15 category.
- 1 8. The telephone customer service method of claim 7  
2 further including the step of storing data representative  
3 of the responses of said service agent.
- 1 9. The telephone customer service method of claim 8  
2 further including the step of enabling the service agent  
3 to optionally enter said data into said database.
- 1 10. The telephone customer service method of claim 9  
2 wherein said step of prompting said service agent prompts  
3 on a real-time basis coincident with the time during  
4 which the service agent responding within said telephone  
5 inquiry.

1 11. The telephone customer service method of claim 9  
2 further including the steps of:  
3 analyzing said stored data; and  
4 distributing the results of the analysis to the  
5 developers of said marketed products.

1 12. The telephone customer service method of claim 11  
2 further including the step of enabling the service agent  
3 to enter unprompted general comments relative to defects  
4 wherein said step of analyzing includes consideration of  
5 said general comments.

1 13. A computer program having code recorded on a  
2 computer readable medium for tracking defects in said  
3 software products in a telephone customer service system  
4 for marketed computer software products wherein customers  
5 telephone service agents at remote service centers  
6 supported by computer controlled displays for service and  
7 technical advice, said computer program comprising:

8 means on said display, ancillary to a customer  
9 telephone inquiry to said service center, for prompting  
10 said service agent at said service center to  
11 interactively select a software defect category to which  
12 said inquiry may relate; and

13 means on said display responsive to a selection of a  
14 software defect category, to interactively prompt said  
15 service agent, during said telephone inquiry, to  
16 interactively respond to a set of statistical questions  
17 related to the defect category.

1 14. The computer program of claim 13 further including  
2 database means associated with said service center for  
3 storing data representative of the responses of said  
4 service agent.

1 15. The computer program of claim 14 further including  
2 means enabling the service agent to optionally enter said  
3 data into said database.

1 16. The computer program of claim 15 wherein said means  
2 on said display for prompting said service agent prompt  
3 on a real-time basis coincident with the time during  
4 which the service agent responding within said telephone  
5 inquiry.

1 17. The computer program of claim 15 further including:  
2 means for analyzing said stored data; and  
3 means for distributing the results of the analysis  
4 to the developers of said marketed products.

1 18. The computer program of claim 17 further including:  
2 means for enabling the service agent to enter  
3 unprompted general comments relative to defects; and  
4 wherein said means for analyzing consider said  
5 general comments.